

Wastewater Operator Certification Program Advisory Committee Meeting Summary August 2, 2000

Attendees included: Tammie McClure, Jill Parker, Tim Pelton, Don Proctor, Chris Sheridan

Welcome & Introductions

Review Agenda

No changes made.

Committee Membership

Discussed ideas/suggestions for filling the vacant committee positions. It was suggested that as a committee member's term ends they will be asked to provide two names of possible replacements.

The committee then decided to have two scheduled meetings per year. The first meeting would be the first Wednesday of April and the second meeting would be the second Wednesday of November. The meeting in April will be in Eastern Washington (i.e., Chelan, Yakima, Ellensburg, etc.) and the meeting in November will be in Lacey.

Back to committee membership - committee members will be notified/reminded of their term ending at the April meeting. At the November meeting outgoing members will be expected to provide Ecology with two names of possible replacements. The Wastewater Operator Certification Coordinator will consider the committee's recommendations as well as accept names of volunteers from outside the committee and make the final decision with regard to membership.

Membership Term Status - Committee started 7/96 & terms were meant to be for 3 years (terms staggered):

Group I Operators

Vacant

Vacant

Group II Operators

Russ Glaser 2 years

Jill Parker 3 years

Public Works Director

Vacant

Ad Hoc

Don Proctor

Group III Operators

Jim Robins 3 years

Chris Sheridan(was III, now IV) 2 years

Group IV Operators

Tim Pelton 3 year term

Joan Thomasson 2 year term

Sewer District Commissioner

Vacant

According to this information, the term has ended for everyone left on the committee.

Program Policies

The committee made a change to item one (1) of the reciprocity policies. The sentence “All other applications for reciprocity will be denied” was deleted. I was tasked with contacting ABC and finding out the process for getting ABC to review a state for reciprocity if the state does not appear on the current reciprocity list provided by ABC. I contacted ABC’s Jennifer McDowel; she explained to me that if a state does not appear on ABC’s reciprocity list, they do not have reciprocity with that state for whatever reason. It may be that the state does not accept ABCs exam as equal to theirs or it may be that it is that state’s policy not to accept reciprocity.

Whatever the reason, an operator coming from a state that does not have reciprocity with ABC will be required to take an exam and his/her application for reciprocity would be denied. The reciprocity list is being updated on a regular basis and the updated list will be sent to the state certification coordinators when complete. Based on my discussion with Jennifer, I have decided to leave the sentence “All other applications for reciprocity will be denied.” in the policies.

I would like to start including the revised policies in application packages as soon as possible, so please let me know if you have any problems or concerns with leaving that sentence in the policies no later than August 28, 2000.

The committee reviewed and updated the Testing Policies based on the procedures for administering the new ABC exams.

Reported Information

Tammie reported on the following:

June 2000 exam -

90% passed

Group I/OIT – of 43 examinees, 38 pass, 5 fail

Group II - of 41 examinees, 38 pass, 3 fail

Group III - of 31 examinees, 28 pass, 3 fail

Group IV - of 12 examinees, 10 pass, 2 fail

Compare that to our previous exam on February 2, 2000

42% passed

Group I/OIT - of 42 examinees, 21 pass, 21 fail

Group II - of 29 examinees, 13 pass, 16 fail

Group III - of 22 examinees, 5 pass, 17 fail

Group IV - of 13 examinees, 5 pass, 8 fail

Professional Growth - 842 operators have not met the requirement as of August 2, 2000.

ABC Exam Conversion Sheets

This topic turned out to be a non-issue. Prior to the first ABC exam several people had concerns about the new ABC conversion sheets compared to the old Ecology conversion sheets. There was information on the Ecology conversion sheets that was not on the ABC conversion sheets. Prior to the exam ABC assured me that their conversion sheets included everything necessary for someone taking their exam. Following the exam there have been no reports of problems with the conversion sheets. The concern seems to have come from a fear of the new and unknown.

Reuse Issues

Questions were raised at our last committee meeting regarding reuse issues. I asked Kathy Cupps to attend this meeting to update everyone on what is happening in reuse and to answer any questions people may have. Attached is a copy of the information Kathy provided.

Fee Overpayment

This topic came from a need to somehow track fee overpayments so that the overpayment may be applied toward renewal or some other OpCert fees as appropriate. It is much too costly to refund every overpayment as they occur, but without some way of tracking the overpayment the money would come in and nothing would ever be done about it. I have been making notes of overpayments in the operator's file. This method works only if the operator knows he has overpaid and actually requests a refund or to have the money applied to some other fee. Otherwise, the money is there but there is nothing to trigger us to apply it somewhere else.

Our fiscal office does not have a way to track overpayments, so I will attempt to track the overpayments in a spreadsheet. Then prior to renewal notices going out in October, I will let fiscal know how much money should be applied to which operator's renewal fees. This idea sounds like it will work in theory, but we'll see how it actually plays out. I'll keep you posted.

Next Meeting

The committee has decided to have two scheduled meetings per year. The first meeting would be the first Wednesday of April and the second meeting would be the second Wednesday of November. The meeting in April will be in Eastern Washington (i.e., Chelan, Yakima, Ellensburg, etc.) and the meeting in November will be in Lacey.